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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5832
INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE 8086
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHJS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1019
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1660
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0677
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4222

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 002264

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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/RSP, EAP/MLS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/20/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [ID](#) [TH](#)

SUBJECT: INDONESIA AGREES TO ASSIST THAILAND REGARDING
ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH

REF: JAKARTA-BANGKOK 8/14 EMAIL

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak for reasons 1.4 (b)(d).

11. (C) Summary: Contacts have confirmed that the Thai government has sought GOI assistance regarding the conflict in southern Thailand. Thai military chief Gen. Sonthi Boonyaratglin raised the matter during his August 8 visit to Jakarta. Leveraging its experience in ending ethnic conflict, gained through the Aceh peace accord, Indonesia has agreed to assist Thailand by providing information and advice. End Summary.

12. (C) Indonesian and Thai officials in Jakarta have confirmed press reports that Thai Commander-in-Chief General Sonthi Boonyaratglin approached the GOI, during a low-profile August 8 visit to Indonesia, to help find a solution to violence in Muslim-majority provinces in southern Thailand. Sonthi made the request during separate meetings with President Yudhoyono, Vice President Kalla and Indonesian Commander-in-Chief Air Marshal Djoko Suyanto. Yuri Thamrin, Director for East Asian Affairs at the Indonesian Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU), portrayed Sonthi's request as a follow-up to previous discussions, including that of Thai King Bhumibol in June with Indonesian Muhammadiyah Chairman Din Syamsuddin. Muhammadiyah leaders separately confirmed to Pol/C that 63 Thai Muslims from the south had met recently with Indonesian counterparts in Yogyakarta on the subject of peaceful coexistence of religions. (Note: Muhammadiyah is a mainstream Indonesian Muslim group with an estimated 30 million members.)

13. (C) Thai Political Counselor Katavetin stressed that the Thai request was simply that Indonesia provide information and advice as to how Thailand could resolve the insurgency in a peaceful manner. The request had been made only to Indonesia, and not to other Southeast Asian neighbors, and was motivated by a belief that Indonesia's success in ending the GAM (Independent Aceh Movement) insurgency in Aceh might offer some lessons for ending the insurgency in Thailand. The request was a sign of the good working relationship between the two militaries. Katavetin added that the Thai government had no evidence to confirm rumors, reported in previous weeks in the Indonesian press, that Thai rebels were receiving training and assistance from Indonesian groups and stressed this was not a factor in the request.

¶4. (C) Dadi Susanto, Director for Defense Strategy at the Indonesian Department of Defense (DEPHAN), confirmed the character of General Sonthi's request. TNI contacts separately confirmed agreement had been reached to facilitate a direct exchange of information between the Thai military command in southern Thailand and the Indonesian military's regional command in northern Sumatra (which includes Aceh), with an eye to monitoring possible movements of militants between southern Thailand and northern Sumatra.

¶5. (C) Given Indonesia's desire to play a constructive role in resolving conflicts within the Islamic world, it is not surprising that the Thai request has received a positive response from the Indonesian government. President Yudhoyono and Vice President Kalla take great pride in their respective roles in effecting a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Aceh. Although the assistance request surfaced in connection with a military-to-military exchange, the previous discussions that Din Syamsuddin and other Indonesian Islamic leaders have had with the Thai leadership suggest that the emerging strategy, as it relates to Indonesia, has both civil and military components.

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